



University
of Victoria

University Finnerty Garden Friends

December 2013 Newsletter

PHOTO: DAPHNE DONALDSON

Dear Friends, as we head into a new year, it's a good time to reflect on where we have come from. For Finnerty Gardens the past 35 years have been a long and productive period of continued development. Today the Gardens are thriving...largely due to the many dedicated people involved with Friends of Finnerty Gardens.

One such person is Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy who, for many years, was professor of math at the University of Victoria. Betty redefined herself after retirement to become very involved with Finnerty Gardens. As she notes in a recent email, "I got involved in about 1985 when Ian [McTaggart Cowan] asked me if I would replace a difficult man managing cash at the sale. I agreed, and then Howard Petch (President of the University) decided to appoint me to the advisory committee. I explained that I knew nothing about plants, and Petch said it was time I learned. Since then, I have been learning..."

Betty stepped in and organized the yearly plant sale, a major fund-raising event, and then presided as chair of the Advisory Committee for many years. Betty, being the consummate organizer, galvanized the group and guided us with good advice and dedication. For me, Betty has epitomized what volunteers represent: with clear guidelines and a talent for organization we can achieve great things. If we needed ideas or help from the University it was Betty who knew where to go. Betty was also responsible for getting Sam Macey to be editor of the newsletter for many years. She was a guiding force on the Advisory Committee, with great skills at keeping the group focused. Now that she has stepped away to tend her Galiano garden, she will be missed. We thank her for all that she has done over the years as a steward and friend to Finnerty Gardens.

This coming year marks an exciting change to our long-standing plant sale. A somewhat smaller and more specialized sale will be held in the parking area adjacent to the Garden itself to enable more people to explore Finnerty Gardens at the height of rhododendron season. Of course, we will be needing volunteers so please consider helping out with this community event in its new location. It will be held on the first Sunday in May as always. We will need people to help with the tallying, taking cash, helping with refreshments, giving tours etc. Please don't forget the date—and feel free to contact the university if you wish to volunteer in any way. You will find information on the sale and on volunteering online at www.uvic.ca/finnerty/community or you can call Joy Davis at 250-472-5474 for further detail.

The gardens continue to thrive with recent enhancements to the Memorial Garden and further additions of plant collections. Thanks to the Advisory Committee—and the curatorial and administrative staff at UVic—the Gardens continue to be a lovely place to bring the community to campus for year-round walks through ever-changing pathways. Don't forget we have self-guided brochures available for those out-of-town guests.

On behalf of our Advisory Committee, I want to wish you and your families all the very best over the holiday season. We value your involvement in the Friends of Finnerty Gardens and look forward to seeing you in the Gardens in the new year!

Carmen Varcoe, Chair

Finnerty Gardens— a time of change and opportunity

The University of Victoria celebrated its 50th birthday in 2012, and as it embarks on the next 50 years in its journey both opportunities and challenges lie ahead. Over the years, the University and the Friends of Finnerty Gardens have forged an important partnership focussed on the stewardship of this wonderful garden. As we look to the future, I thought it timely to provide some insight into how the Gardens are managed, so that the Friends are aware of where university support and commitment to the Gardens resides.

Two very different functional entities within the university oversee Finnerty Gardens. Facilities Management, through the Office of Vice President Finance and Operations, has responsibility for operations management. In my role as Manager of Grounds and Environmental Services, I serve as curator, overseeing planning, budgeting and design. Rhonda Rose, who works as Grounds Supervisor (campus horticulture) focusses on day-to-day maintenance, presentation and overall public safety.

In the Office of Vice President External Relations, Joy Davis has recently assumed responsibility for management of the internal and external community relations associated with the Gardens. This includes but is not limited to supporting the Advisory Committee of the Friends of the Gardens, liaising with the greater community on gardens uses, receiving gifts and donations made to the Gardens, public relations, and providing support to the annual plant sale and other activities.

The Facilities Management and External Relations teams work collaboratively with the Friends to ensure the Gardens are thriving and are accessible to the academic, university and local communities. Both are committed to sustaining the long-term value that Finnerty Gardens have “grown” to represent.

I look forward to working with Friends in the New Year, and wish you all the best over the holiday season.

Bentley Sly, Curator, Finnerty Gardens

Best wishes over the holidays



I would like to join Carmen and Bentley in extending warm wishes for a happy holiday season from External Relations at UVic. We are proud of Finnerty Gardens and very appreciative of the important work of the Friends.

Joy Davis, Director, Special Projects in the Office of the Vice President, External Relations

Mark Your Calendars

“Welcoming Spring”—A Tea for the Friends of Finnerty Gardens

Thursday, March 20th from 2–4 pm at the University Club.

Registration details will be posted on the Finnerty website in early February.

University of Victoria Plant Sale

Sunday, May 4, time to be confirmed.

Parking Lot 6, adjacent to the Finnerty Gardens.

Further details on the plant sale and on volunteer registration will be posted on the Finnerty website in February. See www.uvic.ca/finnerty/

Membership

Membership in the Friends of Finnerty Gardens is \$10 per year (single or couple). Membership includes an occasional newsletter that highlights activities in the Gardens along with events that are open to members. Funds raised through membership support enhancements within the Gardens which would not be possible otherwise.

This newsletter is also available on the University of Victoria's Finnerty Gardens website at www.uvic.ca/finnerty. If you would prefer to receive newsletters by email, we ask that you let us know and we'll update our mailing list accordingly.

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